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# PALMETTO AVIATION

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## 1994 Aviation Hall of Fame Inductees



Sam Austin, 1994  
Aviator of the Year

One of the highlights during the 1994 South Carolina Aviation Conference was the Hall of Fame presentation. Richard Collins, edi-

tor of Flying Magazine, awarded the 1994 Hall of Fame trophies as their achievements were cited by Aviation Association board members.

This year's winners included: Samuel F. Austin — Born in High Point, N.C., and educated at N.C. State and Georgia Tech. He served in Vietnam as an Army officer and worked in industry and local government. He holds a commercial pilot's license with multi-engine, helicopter, and instrument ratings. Prior to becoming Airports District Office manager in 1985, his career spanned 18 years with the Department of Transportation, and served the airport divisions of four FAA regions. Austin is a special friend to South Carolina airports, having presided over millions of dollars of improvements in the Palmetto state, turning a decline infra-

structure into strong assets for our communities. He was named the 1994 South Carolina Aviator of the Year.

Charles Moss Duke, Jr. Astronaut —

Attended high school in Lancaster, S.C. Earned masters degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics from MIT. Awarded PhDs from 6 and Francis Marion College. South Carolina Man of the Year, a member of the S.C. Hall of Fame. Selected astronaut in 1986, assigned to Apollo space program. Lunar Module pilot of Apollo 16,

spent 71 hours on the moon. Over 265 hours in space.

Thomas Cecil Hadwin — A native of South Carolina, graduated from Bamberg High School. Learned to fly in 1939. Hired as a flight instructor in 1942 by Hawthorne School of Aeronautics. He trained 12 classes of cadets and became manager of Hawthorne Aviation in Orangeburg Airport in 1946. Founded Orangeburg Air Service in 1948 with Bevo Howard. He trained

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## New Regional Administrator for FAA's Southern Region

Carolyn Blum has been named FAA Regional Administrator for the Southern Region. She was chosen among a field of nearly two dozen senior executives.

During the past 26 years she's worked at NASA, with the Secretary of Transportation and headed acquisitions for the FAA in Washington, D.C.

Before joining the Southern Region, Blum served as the Acting Executive



Carolyn Blum  
FAA Southern Region  
Administrator

Director for System Development. In that capacity she worked with several of the agency's advanced systems, including the difficult restructuring of the Advanced Automation System program and the advancement of the Global Positioning System program.

"It's exciting to be in a field where aviation is a 24-hour business," Blum said in the November 1994 edition of FAA

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Palmetto Aviation is an official publication of the South Carolina Department of Commerce, Division of Aeronautics. It is designed to inform members of the aviation community, and others interested in aviation, of developments in aviation and aviation facilities, and to keep readers abreast of state, national and international trends in aviation. The Division of Aeronautics is a state agency created in 1935 by the South Carolina General Assembly to foster and promote air commerce in the state.

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Director

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Director of Airports

**Walter I. Johnson**  
Director of Aviation

## From the Director's Desk: Aviation Conference Lessons Learned



Joseph J. Saleeby

**A**fter attending this year's Aviation Conference in Myrtle Beach I know aviation is South Carolina is headed in the right direction.

At the 1994 conference, the S.C. Hall of Fame inducted five of the finest aviators in the state renowned for their outstanding contributions to aviation and South Carolina. To them we owe a word of thanks for helping aeronautics survive during the hard years and flourish through its best.

It seems as the years pass the choices get more difficult and the problems more persistent, especially in aviation.

But this year was different.

At the 1994 conference more issues than ever before were debated and discussed, giving way to heated arguments but also to meaningful talks and hopefully solutions.

As South Carolina airports contemplate their funding options federal and state governments are also assessing their appropriations. Somewhere the needs of the airports will be reconciled with the appropriations of the FAA and the Division of Aeronautics. However

a number of airport projects will not be funded since revenue sources are slowly drying up.

Creativity in revenue is becoming more necessary. That brings me to a recommendation proposed at the conference: funding aviation facilities through the use of designated aviation fuel tax money at the state level.

The proposed recommendations, endorsed by the S.C. Aviation Association, will be submitted to the General Assembly through aviation allies in the legislature, but it needs a wide grass roots effort to be successful.

Awareness of the funding problems airports face is required for the state legislators to resolve the issue adequately.

This year, let's all make a concerted effort to take what we know about aviation in South Carolina and help those who do not.

Our lessons learned from past experiences will surely help those to better aviation in our state in the coming years.

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## Hall Of Fame

(Continued From Page 1)

hundreds of pilots, including airline captains and at least one Air Force General.

Lester F. Hembel — inspired by Lindberg's flight across the Atlantic, he began his aviation career in 1929. Established Hembel

Brothers Flying Service and "barnstormed" his way through the early thirties. Came to South Carolina in 1940 and completed civilian pilot training program. Established and taught aviation courses at 6. Known as "Mr. Helicopter", he was a pioneer introducing the new method of flight to the state. Appointed as an FAA Pilot Examiner in 1964, he issued over 900 pilot certificates through 1993. Named 1975 FAA flight instructor of the year, was awarded the Bronze Plaque of South Carolina.

Joseph B. Wilder — Graduated from the University of Georgia in 1947. Served in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1987 to pre-



(L to R) Richard Collins, Editor of *Flying Magazine*; Lest Hembrell, Aviation Hall of Fame Inductee and Joe Wilder, Aviation Hall of Fame Inductee

sent where he is chairman of many committees. He was a member of the S.C. Aeronautics Commission from 1956 to 1986, chairman from 1978 to 1984, and selected chairman emeritus in 1993. Selected 1993 Legislator of the Year, Chamber of Commerce Man of the Year 1987, and National Peabody Award for community service in 1954 and many other awards. Graduated from Army flight school in class 44F and served in the 10th and 14th Air Force. Has owned several radio stations and selected to the S.C. Broadcasters Hall of Fame. He continues to be a driving force for the advancement of aviation in South Carolina.

## New Regional Administrator

(Continued From Page 1)

Southern Intercom. "I'm looking forward to working with employees, citizens' groups, the airlines and the unions."

Blum said she already sees that the Southern Region faces several challenges: the 1996 Summer Olympics; the international traffic coming into Miami; the political turmoil in the Caribbean and its effect on FAA activities in South Florida; and environmental issues, particularly aircraft noise.

"Without question, my goal is to

help you turn these challenges and opportunities into successes," Blum said recently. "It is my job to help the Southern Region be as efficient and effective as possible. I'm not a technical operations expert. My job is not to tell you what to do or how to do it, but to see that you have the tools you need when you need them."

Blum said the FAA is looking to increase capacity and mitigate noise, and to build bigger airports even though Airport Improvement Program grant funds are declining.

## AVIATION CALENDAR

**Jan. 22 – Breakfast Club**  
Woodward Field, Camden

**Feb. 5 – Breakfast Club**  
OPEN DATE

**Feb. 19 – Breakfast Club**  
Owens Field

**Feb. 26 – Breakfast Club**  
Myrtle Beach Jetport

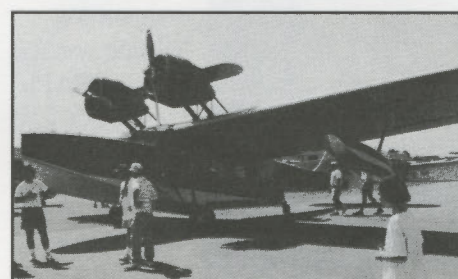
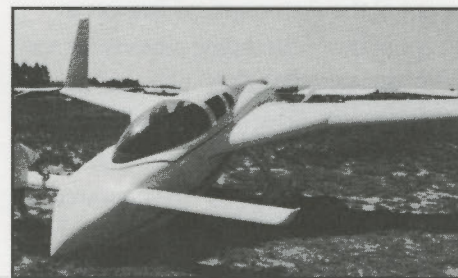
**March 5 – Breakfast Club**  
Aeronautics Division  
Columbia Metropolitan Airport

**March 19 – Breakfast Club**  
Aiken Municipal Airport

## Camden Fly-in Attracts Unusual Aircraft

More than 300 aircraft strutted their stuff during the EAA Chapter 3 Fly-in in Camden.

Colgate Darden's very rare Douglas Dolphin, circa 1929, was just one of many aircraft that delighted people of all ages.





## Williamsburg Airport Renovation To Begin



KINGSTREE - Renovation of runways at the Williamsburg County Airport should begin within the next three months.

"We are proceeding as fast as we possibly can," said J.P. Gamble, grant administrator for Williamsburg County.

Two grants of \$400,000 each were announced last week from the federal and state levels to finance the first phase of the renovation project.

Bids will be taken in about three months, and construction should take about a year to complete, Gamble said.

Additional long-term plans for the airport include the extension of the runway to 5,000 feet and the creation of parallel taxiways, Gamble said.

The grants will allow the rehabilitation of the original 3,700 feet of runway and an overlay of the entire 4,400 feet, Gamble said.

The runway was damaged in 1988 from a fire suppressant aircraft, Gamble said.

"It is now rough and bumpy. We patched it, but it was not successful," he said.

*(Continued On Page 8)*

## Second Biennial S.C. Maintenance Seminar

**Here is the meeting all of you mechanics have been waiting for.**

The FAA Maintenance Seminar will be held on Feb. 18, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., in the main auditorium of the Midlands Tech Airport Campus, in Columbia, S.C. This seminar is open to all maintenance technicians, maintenance technicians with an inspection authorization, repairmen, and airframe and powerplant technician students.

If you're an aircraft technician or an A & P student in an FAR PART 147 School and have a "C" average or better, this seminar will count as 8 hours towards the AMT (Aircraft Maintenance Technician) award program.

The FAA Flight Standards Office in Columbia is looking forward to an excellent meeting. They will be sending a flyer to each maintenance technician in the state sometime during January. The flyer will have an R.S.V.P. in it which you will have to cut out and mail back. Plan to stay at the meeting all day. Certificates will be issued at the end of the day.

## Airport Maintenance No Small Feat



Maintenance Technicians, Division of Aeronautics

The Airport Maintenance Department of the Aeronautics Division is keeping busy scheduling airports for service and regular maintenance.

This year they have mowed 46 airports and have been busy maintaining lighting systems, beacons, PAPIs, VASIs and runway and taxiway lights so all airports in the

state are in their healthiest and safest conditions.

Dan Reeves, a 37-year employee of Aeronautics, said it takes all the division's 25 vehicles to keep airports in the state in top shape.

For more information about airport maintenance services call Dan Reeves at (803) 822-5400.



Maintenance Technician, Division of Aeronautics

## Jetport Grant Will Strengthen Runway

The Myrtle Beach Jetport will receive \$1.9 million in Federal Aviation Administration grants to expand the parking apron on the jetport's commercial air carrier side. The expanded apron is needed to accommodate large charter and commercial airplanes that will be landing at the jetport beginning next year. Construction will be com-

pleted in about a year. Currently, the largest airplane that can pull up to the jetport terminal is a Boeing 757. The new apron will accommodate planes as large as a Boeing 767, Lockheed L1011 or DC-10. The apron also will accommodate overseas flights and allow stacking of commuter airplanes.



# Profile: Nettie Dickerson

By Dennis Quick

The moment you meet her, you know Nettie Dickerson is no shrinking violet. Her outspoken manner has proven to be an asset, befriending her enemies and astounding her allies.

At age 50, she left a successful nursing career to start Bankair Inc., an air transportation service for South Carolina's banks. Most people wouldn't make such a dramatic change at that stage in their lives.

But Nettie — a mother of three and grandmother of seven — isn't most people.

"When we started the business, we had zero planes," she said. "You know the expression, 'pull yourself up by the bootstraps?' We had no bootstraps," Dickerson said in Columbia.

Today, Bankair Inc. has 26 planes (Lears, Cessnas, Mitsubishi's, a Cherokee, and others) and, along with two other businesses she and her children founded — Bankair Courier and Columbia Aviation — has a payroll of more than \$3 million.

"Business has always seemed like nothing more than simple logic to me," Nettie said. "Not complicated, not flashy, just logical. Therefore, if you wish to sell something, find out who has money to spend and what it is that they need or want."

"In the whole country in 1973, the only money was in the oil industry and in the banking industry. There being no oil industry in South Carolina, that left banking," she grinned.

Bankair Inc. transports deposits, checks and documents from one bank to another. The planes fly out of Columbia Metropolitan Airport to destinations not only in South Carolina but to Atlanta, Washington, Charlotte, Memphis, New Orleans, Little Rock, Jacksonville and many other points throughout the South.

The idea came from some good, sound

thinking, and Nettie, eyes aglow with excitement, explained her profitable thought-process.

"Now what could make money for banks that was something they were not already doing?" she said. "They were focused more on lending and acquiring depositors. Now, it seems simple to me that deposits made in one bank and drawn from another can be moved quickly to get immediate credit, and the income from faster transfers can be a source of income for the banks, who would be our customers. At the time, a clearing house for local banks existed but credit from the large out-of-state banks slow in coming."

So Nettie, with her son Charles — a helicopter pilot in Vietnam — founded Bankair Inc. which expedited check clearing procedures. After all, time is money.

Bankair Inc. proved to be not only a successful business but a training center for hundreds of pilots and a good many aircraft mechanics. Pilots who have flown for Nettie now fly for major foreign and domestic airlines. Mechanics who started off servicing Nettie's aircraft are now servicing 747s and larger aircraft.

Bankair serves not only banks but other businesses. It also provides a ground courier service.

Nettie loves working with people — "If there's people there, I'll go," was how she explained her attitude about meetings — and lots of people are indebted to her. Her business acumen helped thrust South Carolina to the forefront of the banking system.

As a successful entrepreneur and aviator, she's achieved acclaim in areas dominated by men. She's a charter member of the South Carolina Aviation Association and would like to see more women enter aviation.

Nettie, a former World War II army nurse, received her pilot's license in 1974 and continues to fly single-engine aircraft.



She used to fly primarily for business. Now that the business is well up on its feet and running steadily along, she flies strictly for recreation and pleasure. She flies a Cessna 140 but would like to get her hands on a Seneca.

Proud of her South Carolina heritage — her ancestors fought in the Revolutionary War — Nettie is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She's also a member of the American Association of University Women, the Ninety Nines and International Women in Aviation, Defense Organization Civilian Association, American Legion and the West Side Baptist Church.

It's hard to picture her not being energetic. When she talks about aviation, her eyes light up and she can't sit still. Clearly, leaving the hospital for the hangar was a decision she never regretted.

Nettie's seemingly boundless energy has led her to service on the Small Business Administration Advisory Council, the South Carolina Baptist Hospital Cancer Board, the Public Relations Board of Hall Institute and the Volunteers for Sister-care.

The secret to her success is more than just a nifty business idea. It's something deeper and, at the same time, simpler.

"I learned early in life that if we share intelligently, the more we share, the more we'll have to share."



## Myrtle Beach Air Show

Aviation fans enjoyed air-planes of every size, shape and description along with aerobatic displays, air races and other thrilling aerial spectacles at the first Carolina Aviation Festival held Oct. 6-9 at the former Myrtle Beach Air Force Base.

The air festival featured Soviet and Chinese fight aircraft, Formula V air races, skywriting, the United Kingdom's "Red Devils" parachute regiment, air-plane rides, acrobatics and other treats.

Aircraft enthusiasts delights in seeing vintage military planes from the '20s, '30s, '40s and '50s in addition to the modern aircraft on display.

The show even included a virtual reality theatre, which allowed viewers the thrill of flying as members of the USN Blue Angels.

**"We want to show people components of aviation that are different from what they've seen at other air shows."**

Skywritten messages 10-miles long in mile-high letters were seen from anywhere on the beach.

Aircraft of the smallest class raced at altitudes of 50-100 feet and speeds of 160-180 MPH.

A vintage North American T-6 and other light aircraft dazzled the crowd with aerial acrobatics.

The air show, which lived up to its "Educate and Entertain" theme, was the result of a year's planning and the work

of 400 volunteers.

"This is a first," said Ron Miller, the event executive director and member of the Grand Strand Aviation Park Inc., a nonprofit organization housing the festival. "We want to show people components of aviation that are different from what they've seen at other air shows."

## Canadian Snowbirds Perform At Darlington

Canada's precision military aerobatics team, the Canadian Snowbirds, made their first appearance in South Carolina on October 5, thrilling spectators at Darlington County Airport.

The half-hour performance began with an eerie appearance of twinkling lights in the distance. Then, in a series of intricate maneuvers, the nine red, white and blue CT-114 Tudor Jets criss-crossed the sky in a captivating display of flying precision and grace.

During one heart-stopping maneuver, three aircraft appeared to cross through one another as they split in three different directions.

The show, sponsored by the Darlington County Sand Hills Air Show Committee, concluded with a spectacular Maple Leaf burst in salute to Canada.

## Dorchester Airport Receives \$942,000

The Dorchester County-Summerville Airport has received a \$942,000 grant from the Federal Aviation Administration for airport improvements.

The grant just announced by U.S. Sen. Fritz Hollings, D-Charleston, is only part of a series of planned upgrades to make Dorchester County more attractive to business and industry prospects, said Dorchester County Airports Manager Ed Carter.

The grant requires a 10 percent match, said Carter, a retired Air Force Colonel with 26 years experience as a fighter pilot.

Carter said 5 percent will come from county funds and another 5 percent is

being put up by the South Carolina Division of Aeronautics.

The money will buy a taxiway and medium-intensive lighting system for the airport in Summerville, which was built in 1986 with a single runway.

Carter said the Dorchester County airports were built to take air traffic pressure off the main airport in Charleston.

Planes are now using the Summerville facility's runway to taxi prior to takeoff and after landing, creating some congestion, Carter said.

The taxiway to the parking ramp will clear the landing strip for ingoing and outgoing traffic by providing a clear and separate route to the parking ramp,

Carter said.

Soon, Carter will be looking at obtaining another FAA grant to extend the runway for corporate jets.

He said he also anticipates a multi-use facility at the Summerville site, complete with meeting rooms for corporate users.

"This is part of the county's overall economic development thrust," Carter said.

Carolina Aviation, managed by fixed base operator Tom Brown, is based at the Summerville site to give instructions, sell gas, book charter passengers and rent airplanes to qualified pilots, Carter said.



## Airport Runway Reconstruction Critical, County Council Is Told

Georgetown County may solicit bids in February for reconstruction of an airport runway that could prove disastrous if something isn't done about it, according to one expert.

Project costs to renovate a portion of the runway could cost \$1.7 to \$2 million, according to Jay Talbert of Talbert and Bright Engineers of Wilmington, N.C. Georgetown County could cover \$1.58 million of that through grants from the Federal Aviation Administration and the S.C. Division of Aeronautics.

The remaining \$300,000 to \$600,000 would be the county's responsibility to cover, said Clyde Stalvey, airport commission chairman. Revenues generated at the airport from rentals should be enough to cover any remaining costs to the county, said council Chairman Bill Nichols.

Bidding out the project in the spring will get the county a better price, Talbert suggested during Tuesday's council meeting.

Should this go through, it will be one of the largest general aviation enhancement and improvement projects in the state this fiscal year.

Georgetown's airport was built in the 1940s as a military airfield. Talbert said many similar airports were constructed correctly during World War II, but were meant to last only 10 years.

Analysis of the runway last spring turned up 1,500 "anomalies," Talbert told council. That means the possibility of runway failure from holes or roots

and stumps growing under the pavement. Coastal areas are especially prone to rising water tables that can rot organic material over time.

***"Ultimately, there will be physical dropouts in the pavement, it could be disastrous for anyone landing at the airport if that happens."***

"Ultimately, there will be physical dropouts in the pavement," Talbert said. "It could be disastrous for anyone landing (at the airport) if that happens." The airport's parallel taxiway also shows similar pavement conditions as the runway and funds to improve that could be applied for next spring, Talbert said. Nichols said he doesn't know exactly when

council will move on the airport project or which renovations it can financially support, but he said council does have to make a move on it.

"It's something we have got to do if we want to continue to see the airport exist," he said.

## Business At Chester Airport Calls For Brotherly Love

Brian and Chad Pressley have had a few close calls as brothers but their latest may also be their biggest challenge. The Pressley brothers have started "Ambassadair" at the Chester County Airport.

Ambassadair, which opened in early August, is an aviation business which strips paint and parts from old planes and restores the plane's body to a more modern version.

"We strip planes and restore them to what the owner wants," said Brian Pressley. "I am a flight instructor, and we hope to eventually branch out into flight instruction."

The Pressley brothers, natives of Rockingham, N.C., said that, so far, three planes have been restored since they opened the business in August.

"Right now, it is just the two of us, but we have already finished three planes. It takes about three to four weeks to get finished with only two guys working on it."

Brian Pressley said that most of the restored planes are at least 20 to 30 years old.

"They come in here looking terrible; most of them are pretty old, ranging from the 1950's-to-1970's model.

"Right now, they are not making many new aircraft, so now people are just getting them restored.

"So there is a demand for that right now. When I got out of college, I messed around for about two-to-three years because it is hard to get into aviation.

"But then, I saw the demand for paint jobs on airplanes."

So far, the business has restored a 1963 182-model plane; and a 1978 152-model aircraft.

The Pressley brothers are currently putting the finishing touches on another plane.

In addition to the Pressley brothers, another employee, Aubrey Porter, also assists in restoring the planes.



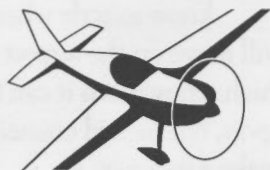


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## Inside Palmetto Aviation:

- Nettie Dickerson's A Live Wire
- 1994 Aviation Hall of Fame
- Carolyn Blum named FAA Regional Administrator



...and much more!

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## Williamsburg Renovation

*(Continued From Page 4)*

The airport, located off U.S. 52 in Kingstree, attracts mostly corporate planes, crop dusters and private aircraft, Gamble said.

But the disrepair of the current runway has caused corporate aircraft to land elsewhere, he said.

The extension of the runway to 5,000 feet should also attract corporate jets to the airport, he said.

"It's economic development. That's what it's all about," he said.

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## Congratulations to the New 1995 Officers Elected At The Annual SCAA Conference at Myrtle Beach:

**President** Gary Varga, WK  
Dickson & Co., Columbia

**Vice President** Lynne Douglas,  
Columbia Metropolitan Airport

**Treasurer** Carroll Joye,  
Orangeburg Municipal Airport

**Secretary** Ron Wade,  
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Curt Bramblett  
Frank Anderson  
Wayne Corley  
Bill Pearson  
Robert Woods.